and separate reservation in employment and education for the backward areas of Telengana (A.P.) and Vidarbha (Maharashtra); and

(d) if so, the reasons for the discrimination against the aspirations of the people of backward areas in Karnataka?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI I.D. SWAMI): (a) and (b) A proposal had been received from the State Government of Karnataka for amending Article 371 of the Constitution of India to provide for region-wise reservation in employment and admission to educational institutions in Karnataka on the lines of provisions in Article 371 D of the Constitution of India with respect to the State of Andhra Pradesh. It was not found feasible.

(c) Article 371 (2) was inserted through an amendment to make speciaUprovisions empowering the President to make orders in respect of Maharashtra and Gujarat to provide for any special responsibility of the Governors of Maharashtra and Gujarat, *inter-alia* to provide adequate facilities for technical education and vocational training, and adequate opportunities for employment in service under the control of the State Government. Article 371-D was inserted to make special provisions for the State of Andhra Pradesh as a whole for equitable opportunities and facilities for the people belonging to different parts of the State in the matter of public employment and education.

(d) The circumstances in Andhra Pradesh that led to the insertion of Article 371 D in the Constitution in 1973 do not exist in Karnataka.

Charges levelled against Iftikar Geelani

†2233. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
SHRI LAJPAT RAI:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Iftikar Geelani, Correspondent, 'Kashmir Times' was arrested by the police in the year 2002 in Delhi;

(b) if so, the complete details in this regard;

(d) the charges levelled against Geelani;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(d) whether it is also a fact that even after clearing Geelani of any charges by the concerned department in the Army, the police withdraw the case against Geelani from the court after a long time; and

(e) if so, the details regarding the delay and reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI HARIN PATHAK): (a) to (c) During a search and seizure operation at the residence of Iftikar Geelani on 9.6.2002, Income Tax Department recovered a print out from the computer of Shri Geelani containing deployment of Indian Army and Para Military Forces in J&K. The information was considered prejudicial to the safety and security of the country and therefore, Syed Iftikar Geelani was arrested by Delhi Police under the Official Secrets Act, 1923.

(d) and (e) Government after considering the mattter and after consultation with all concerned including Ministry of Law allowed the withdrawal of the case on administrative grounds and in public interest. There was no delay in this regard.

National Identity Card

2234. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 798 given in the Rajya Sabha on 26th February, 2003 and state:

(a) whether any consultation has taken place with the States in this regard to the issue of NIC;

(b) if so, the details of the discussions; and

(c) how many States have accepted the proposal for issuing multipurpose National Identity Card?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI I.D. SWAMI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The proposal to issue Multi-purpose National Identity Cards to the Indian citizens was discussed in the Chief Secretaries and Chief Ministers Conference held on 7th January, 2003 and 8th February, 2003 respectively. All the States welcomes the initiative of the Central Government for introduction of Multi-purpose National Identity Card scheme